



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

Crime Prevention Strategy

2025 'Prevention First'

**we care
we listen
we act**

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Chief Constable's Welcome



I am pleased to introduce 'Prevention First' as the Crime Prevention Strategy of the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland will always respond to and investigate criminal behaviour through targeted, robust and proactive methods of law enforcement; the community would expect nothing less of their Police Service. However, we recognise, as did Sir Robert Peel in 1829, that law enforcement alone is only one element of addressing criminality. As Chief Constable, it is my aim through 'Prevention First' to ensure that the prevention of crime is at the heart of our daily business in ensuring that we deliver a victim focused, responsive, visible and accessible policing service for all of the citizens of Northern Ireland.

"The basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder. The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it."

Sir Robert Peel, 1829

While we continue to place the victims of crime at the centre of all we do, we also recognise that dealing with the causes and drivers of crime will be critical in reducing harm in our communities. Prevention is always better than cure.

'Prevention First' underpins not only what we do, but also how we deliver for the people of Northern Ireland. I am convinced that the delivery of this strategy is the conduit whereby we as a police service can translate our routine policing business, focused on early intervention and engagement, into enhancing safer communities and reducing harm for the vulnerable. It is my desire to realign the mindset and culture of the Police Service of Northern Ireland to make the principles of 'Prevention First' the core business for the whole of our organisation. All Police personnel must take every

opportunity to prevent crime and reduce harm to have a positive and long-term impact for all our citizens.

We cannot achieve this by ourselves. Working alongside our key partner agencies and the public will be the most effective way forward to prevent crime and disorder in Northern Ireland.

Thank you for your continued support.

Simon Byrne
Chief Constable
Police Service of Northern Ireland

Crime Prevention and Harm Reduction Vision

we care, we listen, we act

ACCESSIBLE

Maximise partnership and evidence based prevention activities

VISIBLE

Evolve community policing so that the public can see it and feel its direct impact

RESPONSIVE

Embed a culture and mindset of proactive versus reactive policing

VICTIM FOCUSED

Tackle drivers and vulnerabilities associated with victimisation

Fewer victims, fewer offences and less demand on policing, achieved by addressing the causes of crime utilising sophisticated, partnership orientated, problem solving.

SECTION 1

The Drivers of Crime

Our fundamental approach to Crime Prevention will focus on the Victims of Crime, the Offender and the Location of the crime. In addition, 'Prevention First' considers the seven key drivers of crime in Northern Ireland:

Seven Key Drivers of Crime in Northern Ireland *



Effectiveness of Criminal Justice

The police, courts, prisons and probation services can prevent crime through deterrence, legitimacy, incapacitation and rehabilitation.

>> We will:

Ensure that crimes reported to the police are dealt with in a prompt and visible way. This will deter offenders and give confidence to the community.

Opportunity

Research indicates that the degree of opportunity can significantly affect subsequent criminal behaviour.

>> We will:

Prevent crime by removing or designing out opportunities for criminals to offend, both offline and online.

Profit

Offenders are motivated by financial gain.

>> We will:

Make it harder for criminals, particularly organised criminals, to benefit financially from their crimes by working with law enforcement partners to hit criminals where it hurts - in the pocket - and demonstrate that crime does not pay.

Alcohol

Alcohol misuse places a strain on our emergency services and is a significant cost burden on society as well as being a significant factor in a number of crime types.

>> We will:

Help to make the night time economy safe so people can enjoy social environments without fear of becoming a victim of alcohol-related crime or disorder, enabling local economies to grow.

Terrorist and Paramilitary Activity

The threat from terrorists and paramilitaries in Northern Ireland remains significant.

>> We will:

Deploy specialist resources and assets to target those involved in terrorist and paramilitary related activity. Working with partners and the public we will restrict activity that seeks to fund terrorism and influence the most vulnerable.

Drugs

People are motivated to commit crime to fund drug use. Drug use can in itself drive criminal behaviour. Organised crime gangs supply the illegal drug market.

>> We will:

Restrict the supply of drugs and tackle the organised crime gangs behind the drugs trade. We will help to prevent drug misuse in our communities and support people dependent on drugs through treatment and recovery.

Character

Vulnerability has a significant impact in peoples' early and later lives. Our thinking needs to be trauma-informed, recognising the effect that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have on peoples' lives.

These can be a source of trauma and criminal behaviour from truancy through to the committing of a criminal act. This will allow us to develop policies which embed trauma informed practice in how we reduce vulnerability.

>> We will:

Intervene at an early stage with those exposed to an environment that might lead to a higher likelihood of committing crime.

** Effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System, Opportunity, Profit, Drugs, Alcohol and Character are the Six Drivers of Crime in the United Kingdom according to the Home Office Modern Crime Prevention Strategy, March 2016. Terrorist and Paramilitary Activity is a further driver of crime in Northern Ireland.*

SECTION 2

Our Business

Why we are here

Our Purpose
Keeping People Safe

Our Vision
A Service that is
Visible, Accessible,
Responsive,
Victim Focused

Our Values
We Care
about the public, our
staff and our partners

We Listen
to the public, our staff
and our partners

We Take Action
with the public, our
staff and our partners

Our Oversight
The Policing Board will
drive forward, on behalf
of the community,
a continually improving
Police Service
which is representative
of the community it
serves through effective,
independent
oversight of policing

What we do

Our Strategies
We will place problem solving,
crime prevention and harm
reduction at the core of
our service

We will exploit technology to
make public contact quicker,
easier and make staff more
productive. We will harness
technology to fight crime

We will evolve Neighbourhood
Policing so that the public can
see it and feel its direct contact

Our Strategic Priorities

Turning the curve

People feel safe and
have trust and confidence
in the Police Service

Protect the most vulnerable
in our communities

Tackling Serious
and Organised Crime

Dealing with
Violent Extremism

Building a culture of
Community Policing

Encouraging innovation
and risk taking

Progression for a diverse
workforce and
procedural fairness

How we do it

Our People Are:
Valued
High Performing
Equipped and Empowered
Visible
Accessible
Responsive
Victim Focused

Our Partnerships
We will work with
communities to
harness their talents to
build cohesion, trust and
respect for the rule of law

Our Transformation Programme

Northern Ireland
Policing Plan

Modernising Our
Service Delivery

Evidence Based Policing

Community Empowerment
and Partnership Working

‘Prevention First’ is our Business

While incidents of crime have generally been reducing in Northern Ireland over recent years, crime still affects too many people in our society. Confidence in the Police Service of Northern Ireland is high, but as a police service we strive to do even better to protect our citizens, particularly from emerging crime types such as cyber-crime and domestic violence.

The ‘Prevention First’ mindset is for the Police Service to take every opportunity to prevent and reduce harm. This applies across all of our business and is relevant to every police officer and every member of police staff, no matter what their role in the organisation.

Our staff will be enabled to understand their role in crime prevention and ultimately in ensuring a safer Northern Ireland for everyone. We will embed ‘Prevention First’ as a key operating model and we will continue to work closely with partner agencies to deliver the best service we can.

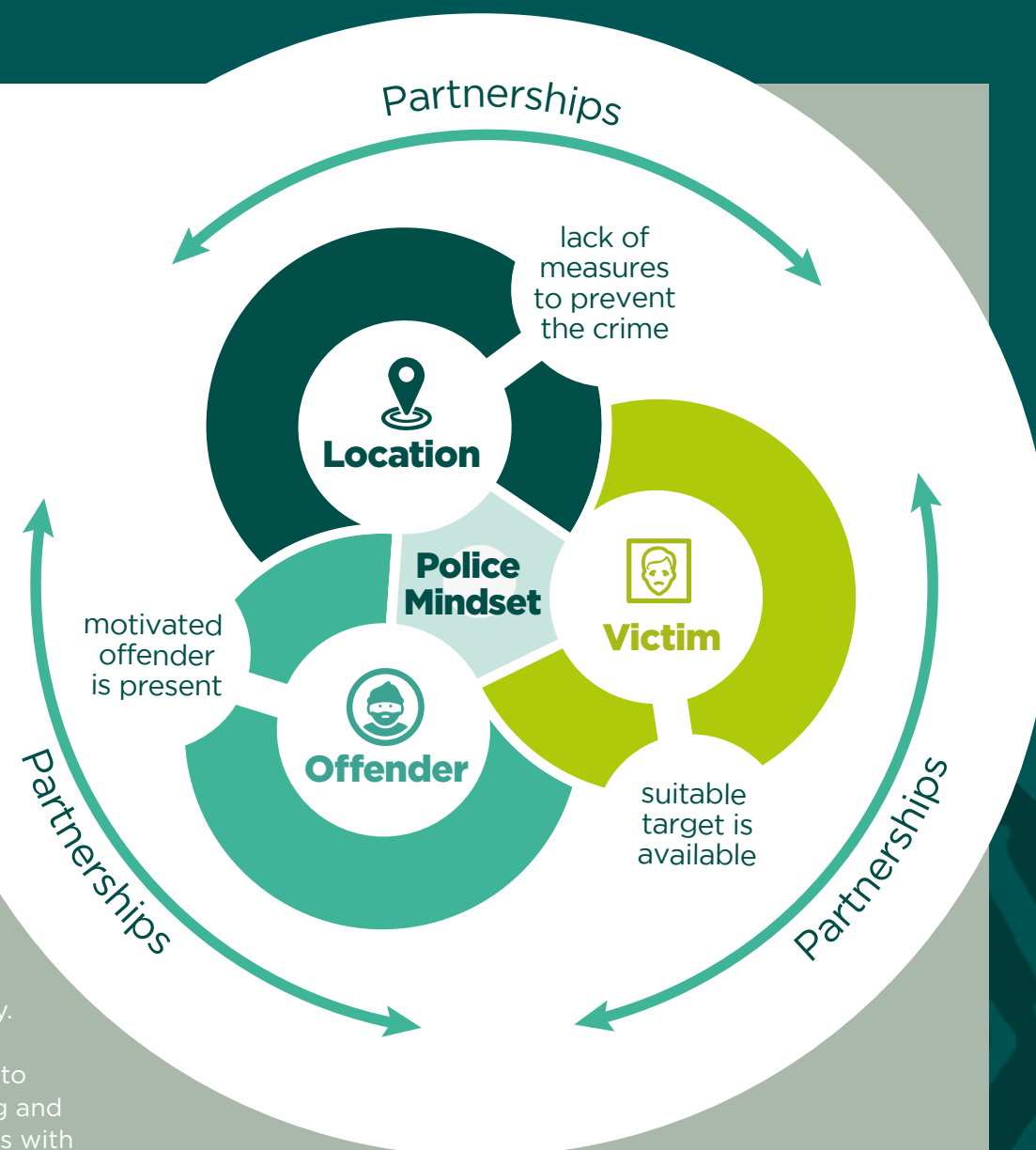
SECTION 3

Our Approach to Crime Prevention

For a crime to be successful, three elements must first exist; a victim, an offender and a location. If any of these are absent, a crime will not occur.

Our approach to Crime Prevention will therefore focus on care for our victims of crime, on the management of our offenders and on the locations where crimes happen most frequently.

We must also continue to invest in building strong and sustainable partnerships with our communities and our partner agencies.



Responsibility to Victims of Crime

We continue to place a strong emphasis on recognising our responsibilities to victims of crime, first and foremost because we care about them. We are responding to real people who deserve to be treated according to their individual needs. We will listen and show empathy to our victims and we will be attuned to their needs and vulnerabilities. We will act to develop our procedures to focus on preventing people becoming victims. We will provide information and support for victims and we will hold offenders to account. By working closely with partner agencies, we will focus on reducing crime against repeat victims which will have a significant impact on overall crime reduction. This is linked directly to the Northern Ireland Policing Board's Policing Plan Outcome 1: We have a safe community.

Management of Offenders

Dealing appropriately and quickly with offenders will always be part of our core business. We will work with partners and specialist agencies to divert individuals from committing crime and we will target our activity to prevent those who have offended from offending again. We will focus our activities on the criminal, and not just on the crime or the vulnerability.

Locations of Crime

We know that a relatively small number of locations generate a disproportionate amount of calls for service relating to crime. By focusing on these locations, we have the potential to significantly reduce harm and vulnerability. We will continue to focus on preventing harm in repeat locations. Through the appropriate analytical information we can better understand where crime is taking place so we can deploy our resources and prevention solution designs more effectively.

Effective Partnerships

Strong, effective partnerships which promote trust and confidence encompass our approach to preventing crime and reducing harm. We need to gain a better understanding of the issues that drive crime and offending and work together with other agencies, service providers and the community to reduce these over time. We will ensure multi-agency and partnership approaches at all levels (national, regional and local) and we will develop achievable, outcome based action plans which utilise the skill set of all partners.

SECTION 4

Our Deployment Model

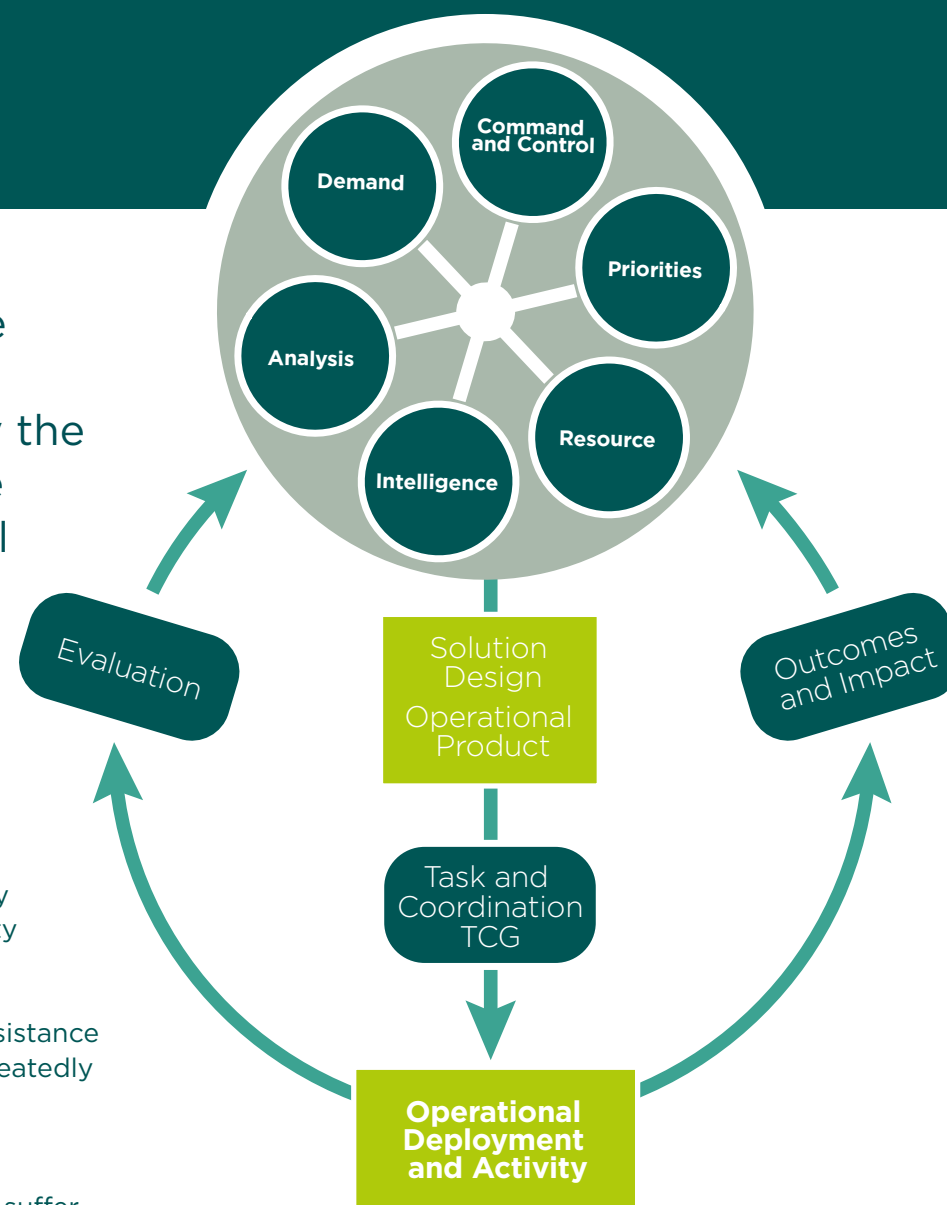
Our deployment model will enable our key decision makers to deploy the most appropriate resources to local issues using a consistent approach.

>> We will:

- Act quickly and decisively against repeat and priority offenders.
- Provide the necessary assistance and support to those repeatedly victimised.
- Maximise resources to locations that repeatedly suffer disproportionate levels of crime.

>> We will:

Ensure that our deployments are informed by effective practice which has been proven to work in the past.


>> We will:

Continually measure, monitor and evaluate our actions to ensure that we have achieved the desired outcome and we will be flexible in adjusting our approach if required.

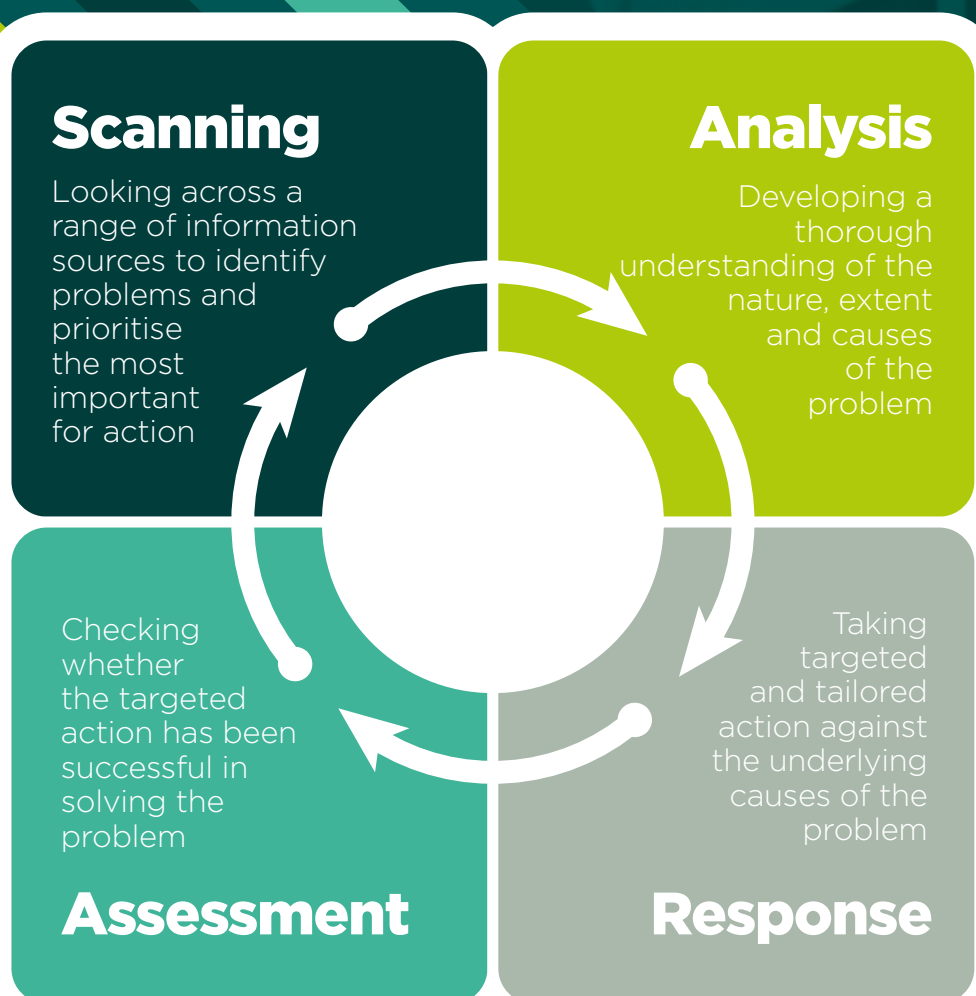
Our Deployment Model

will be based on the following key elements;

- Knowing our current and future Demand (Intelligence and Analysis)
- Knowing our Resources and partner Resources in order to commit to current and future demand (Asset Management)
- Having a process for Prioritising and Committing resources and actions to the issues (Tasking and Coordination)
- Enabling this through Leadership and Communication (Activity)
- Assessing the impact of activity (Outcomes and Evaluation)
- Use of the * **SARA problem solving model** below to support this plan

SARA Problem Solving Model

* While the established problem solving model of the Police Service of Northern Ireland is the National Decision Model/ Problem Analysis Triangle, we will use SARA as a higher level model for solving more complex and longer term crime prevention issues in partnership with our key stakeholders.



SECTION 5

Mindset and Culture -

Taking Every Opportunity to Prevent Crime

Central to our 'Prevention First' approach is the mindset and the culture of our organisation.

'Prevention First' represents a challenge to our thinking as a police service.

It puts Crime Prevention at the heart of our core business and will focus our staff to looking beyond our response to the immediate situation and taking every opportunity to prevent harm.

We understand the need for our officers and staff to move to a more proactive and preventative stance on criminality and we will develop, support and empower our people to maximise our effectiveness at reducing harm. We will move towards all of our public facing staff providing practical crime prevention advice and support where and when required. By doing so, we will rebalance our strategic and tactical efforts towards a prevention approach.

The strategy is not asking our police officers and staff to do more; rather it asks how we can all take advantage of relationships and interactions we currently have with victims, offenders, partner agencies and members of the community to prevent future or on-going harm and ultimately to have a long-term positive impact on all the citizens of Northern Ireland.

Our leaders at every level will role model the 'Prevention First' mindset to their staff, partners and communities. Staff in every part of the organisation will be enabled to understand how they contribute to 'Prevention First' through their role and, in so doing, play a pivotal role in building safer communities.

The Action Plan generated from this Strategy will help develop an organisation that is capable of delivering an excellent 'Prevention First' service in a fast-changing world.

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